



**NC FAST**

North Carolina Families Accessing  
Services through Technology

# **Child Care Provider Preparation Guide**

**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST)**

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**NOTE: Information presented in this document is current as of the last revision date and is subject to change. This document is meant to provide as much information as possible at this time, including some details that may not yet be finalized. Additional information and clarification will be added and communicated as it becomes available.**



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) is an integrated case management system issuing benefits and services to the people of North Carolina. First implemented in 2012, NC FAST is currently used by all 100 Counties to administer Food & Nutrition Services, Work First / TANF, Medicaid, Refugee Assistance, and Special Assistance. In the fall of 2016, County Departments of Social Services (DSS) Local Purchasing Agencies (LPAs) will begin using NC FAST to administer Subsidized Child Care Assistance (SCCA). Benefits of NC FAST include...

- For families: one-time entry of information for multiple programs (including SCCA); expedited, consistent determinations
- For Counties: sharing of information across multiple programs; automation of repetitive paper-based administrative tasks
- For Providers:
  - Easy access to the information Providers need, such as vouchers & attendance rosters. Update Provider information online with the click of a button.
  - LESS PAPER! Sign documents & submit attendance electronically.
  - NO SWIPING! No POS machines to use, and no special paper to purchase.
  - No individual County contracts—once enrolled in the Provider Portal, Providers can serve children in any County in NC!
  - Payments directly to Provider savings/checking account.

The purpose of this Child Care Provider Preparation Guide (PPG) is to provide an informative resource for child care Providers who participate in SCCA to prepare for the implementation of the Provider Portal. The PPG will focus solely on SCCA from the perspective of the Provider. Providers should be actively preparing by planning for upcoming activities and changes to current SCCA business processes. The PPG is organized into various sections that will provide a means to thoroughly think through the various process and operational areas impacted by the implementation. The information, questions, and considerations contained in the document will ensure that each Provider will address the items necessary to be prepared for go-live.

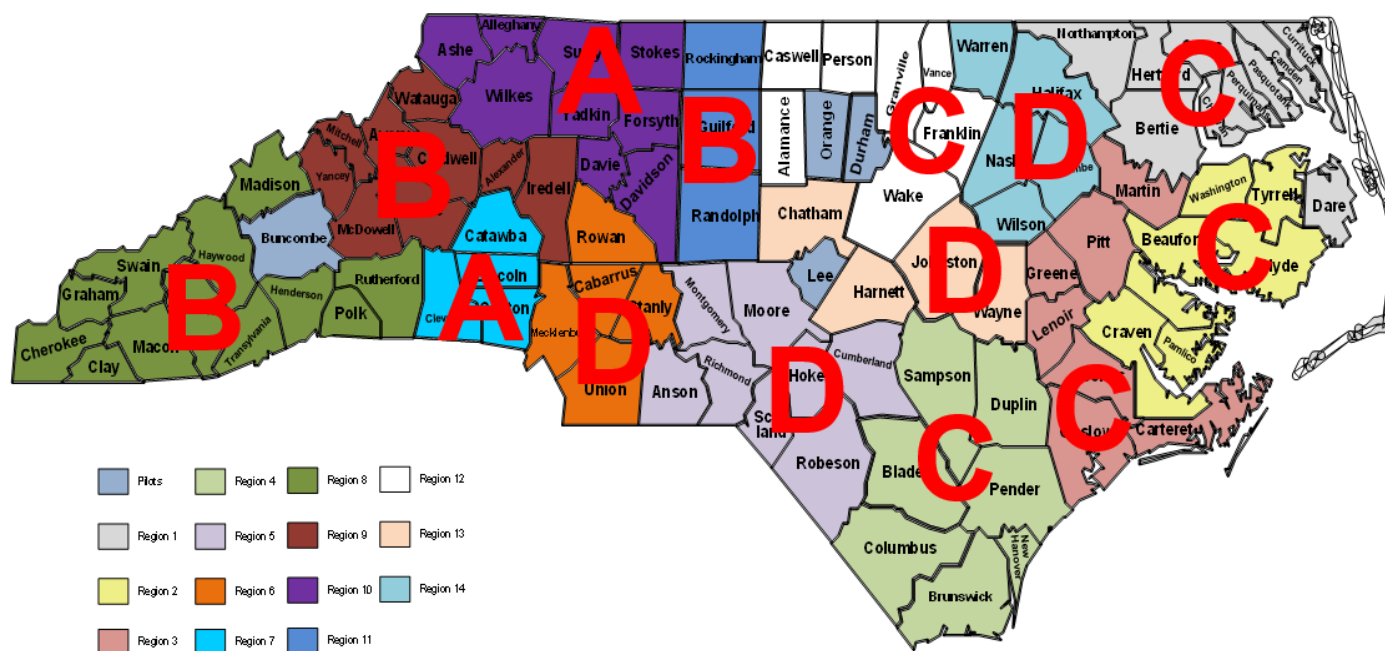
This document is intended to be reviewed by facility managers, directors, and any other staff that will be responsible for entering, updating, or reviewing information in the Provider Portal, from initial enrollment, to managing vouchers, to entering attendance. For the sake of simplicity, the term “Provider” is used throughout this document when referring to anyone who will use the Provider Portal on behalf of the child care facility. It is used interchangeably with the term “Facility”.

## 2.0 NC FAST CHILD CARE PROVIDER TIMELINE

The timeline and map below show how Counties will go live with SCCA.\* The project will begin implementation with a set of four Pilot Counties—these Counties will provide early feedback on the system so the project can make any adjustments needed before implementing it for others. The project will then be implemented for all other Counties in four groups, A, B, C, and D, with the groups based on groupings of Resource and Referral Agency regions. Pilot Providers will begin enrolling in July 2016, followed by the remaining groups between August and October 2016. Pilots will begin accepting vouchers and submitting attendance, completing their transition to the Provider Portal, in March 2017, followed by...

- Group A in June 2017
- Group B in July 2017
- Group C in August 2017
- Group D in November 2017

**\*The timeline is subject to change.**



### 3.0 PROVIDER START, STOP, CONTINUE

With the implementation of the Provider Portal, each Provider will:

#### Start:



- Utilizing a web-based Provider Portal to participate in SCCA—this requires regular internet access
- Completing all new enrollments and re-enrollments (including Annual Agreement) in the Provider Portal
- Receiving, signing, and submitting vouchers electronically via the Provider Portal
- Recording attendance electronically via the Provider Portal
- Receiving all payments from Federal and State funds for SCCA via direct deposit—this means all Providers must have a bank account and enroll with the NC FAST direct deposit processor, FIS Merchant Services (fund source will be shown on the Voucher)
- Reporting the number of private paying children cared for when submitting attendance via the Provider Portal
- Reporting changes (increases or decreases) in private-pay rates for services via the Provider Portal

#### Stop:



- Enrolling or completing contracts with individual Counties—once completing enrollment in the Provider Portal, the Provider may accept subsidy or SCCA vouchers from any North Carolina County
- Submitting paper vouchers and attendance rosters
- Receiving checks as payment for SCCA paid by the LPA with Federal or State funds
- Accepting the Annual Agreement on paper

#### Continue:



- Receiving checks or direct deposit as payment for SCCA paid by the LPA with *County funds*
- Accepting or rejecting vouchers within 30 days of receipt
- Completing annual enrollment—this must be completed via the Provider Portal by December 31<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year
- Reporting changes in private-pay rates

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## 4.0 HIGH-LEVEL TO-BE PROCESSES

The following sections outline the expected SCCA business processes in the Provider Portal. Note that these sections do not capture the complete functionality or every consideration a Provider may encounter. Instead, these sections provide a general framework of what the future business processes will look like and how SCCA enrollment, vouchers, and attendance will be managed in the Provider Portal.

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## 4.1 Provider Enrollment

- 1) In order to access the Provider Portal, a Provider must obtain a Business NCID and have it linked to the Provider record in NC FAST by the County LPA. This process is designed to ensure that all NCIDs are linked to the appropriate accounts in NC FAST and that a Provider's NCID and account is linked correctly. There is no cost to obtain an NCID. It is a security identifier of users accessing State systems.
  - a. Access the NCID website at <https://ncid.nc.gov> to register as a Business User. A Provider must provide a valid email address through which to activate the account and receive important messages from NCID. (The Business NCID for the Provider Portal must be used only for the Provider Portal, no other state systems.)
  - b. Provider should contact the LPA and provide the NCID so that it may be linked with the Provider's record in NC FAST. **(If a Provider is out-of-North-Carolina, the Provider will contact DHHS DCDEE at 919-814-6380 and ask for the NC FAST Provider Manager to be linked.)**
    - If a Provider has already provided care under SCCA, the Provider will need to provide the LPA the Provider's Facility ID to verify identity.
    - If a Provider has not yet provided care under SCCA, the Provider will need to visit the LPA in-person with a photo ID and a copy of the Provider's DCDEE license to verify identity.
    - If more than one individual will access and use the Provider Portal, an NCID for each individual will be needed so they can all be linked to the appropriate Provider account.
    - Each Provider should designate one staff member to provide all of the Provider's NCIDs to the LPA. When providing each NCID, the LPA will also need to know the role, which specifies what actions the user will be able to complete, each user will have in the Provider Portal (see Section 6.0 below).
    - If an individual works at more than one Provider, she or he will still obtain only one NCID for the Provider Portal. Both Providers will communicate the NCID to their specific LPA, and the NCID will be linked to both Providers' accounts in NC FAST. The individual must have the same Provider Portal role (that is, Provider User or Provider Director) for both Providers—the system will not allow for an individual to have two different roles. Each time she or he logs into the Provider Portal, she or he will select which Provider account to work under during that login—the two Providers' accounts will be completely separate.
  - c. **Once a Provider's NCID has been linked by the LPA, the Provider may log into the Provider Portal at <http://providerportal.nc.gov>.**
- 2) After obtaining an NCID and having it linked to the Provider's account, a Provider will need to enroll via the Provider Portal. To do so...
  - Enter enrollment information, including shifts offered, days worked (holidays, inclement weather days, teacher workdays), and private pay rates.



- On completing the enrollment questions, a Provider's approved subsidy rates will be displayed. Then the Provider's Annual Provider Contract (Annual Agreement) will be displayed.
- 3) Sign the Annual Provider Contract electronically via e-signature and submit it to complete enrollment. After completing initial enrollment in the Provider Portal, a Provider will re-enroll through the Provider Portal on a yearly basis. **Note: In order to complete enrollment, a Provider must have an active DCDEE regulatory license or notice of compliance.**
- 4) The Annual Provider Contract and Approval notice will be generated and available in PDF format in the "Notices" section of the Provider Portal.

Here is a visual representation of the steps above:



**Note:** This process will need to be completed within the timeframe discussed above (Section 2.0) in order for a Provider to receive timely payment for SCCA.

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## 4.2 Vouchers

- 1) Providers must be successfully enrolled in the Provider Portal in order to accept or reject vouchers.
- 2) When a Child Care Worker at an LPA processes and approves a child care case in NC FAST, a voucher will be generated automatically for the chosen Provider.
  - a. Providers will have a message on their Provider Portal homepage indicating there are vouchers awaiting approval.
  - b. Vouchers must be accepted or rejected (within the Provider Portal) within 30 days of generation. A notification will be displayed on the Provider home page for vouchers that are 20 days past their issuance date. If a voucher is not signed by both the Parent / Responsible Adult and the Provider by the 30th calendar day, the voucher will be canceled. If the Parent / Responsible Adult requests the voucher to be reissued, the new voucher has to be signed by both the Parent / Responsible Adult and the Provider within 60 calendar days after the issuance of the initial voucher. Payments will not be made for vouchers reissued more than 60 calendar days after the issuance date of the original voucher.
- 3) After accepting a voucher, it will be considered approved and subsidy payments will be authorized based on the voucher start date / the child's first day of attendance.
- 4) After accepting a voucher, NC FAST will add the child(ren) to the roster for the corresponding month(s).

### Voucher Status

Vouchers awaiting some type of action will appear in the "Vouchers" section of the Provider Portal. Possible voucher statuses may include...

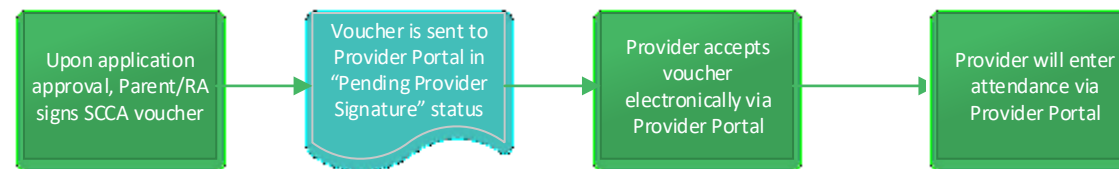
- **Pending Provider Enrollment** – voucher will be view-only, as Provider has not completed enrollment in the Provider Portal
- **Pending-Cancellation Provider Enrollment** – voucher will be view-only, as Provider has not completed enrollment in the Provider Portal and the voucher is approaching the 30-day deadline
- **Pending Parent Signature** – voucher will be view-only, as the parent has not provided a signature for the LPA
- **Pending-Cancellation Parent Signature** – voucher will be view-only, as the parent has not provided a signature for the LPA and the voucher is approaching the 30-day deadline
- **Pending Provider Signature** – Provider needs to take action on the voucher (accept or reject)
- **Pending-Cancellation Provider Signature** – Provider needs to take action on the voucher (accept or reject) and the voucher is approaching the 30-day deadline

Providers will be able to view a history of vouchers that have already been accepted, rejected, or canceled.

### 4.3 Managing Rosters / Submitting Attendance

- 1) On the first day of the month, the monthly roster will be generated in the Provider Portal. (The home page will indicate when the roster is available.)
  - Example: On September 1, the roster for the service period of September will become available. (Please note that during a County's activation month, children will appear on the roster only after the County's cases have been activated. After the activation month, the full roster of children will be available on the first day of the month.)
- 2) Providers will record daily attendance for each child in care receiving SCCA. (As new vouchers are accepted, children will be added to the roster.)
- 3) Providers must record on the roster the number of private pay children served on each shift.
- 4) Upon completion, the Provider will submit the roster via the Provider Portal—the submission deadline will be shown in the Provider Portal. (A monthly roster will be due by 9:00 PM the fifth day of the following month, but Providers will be able to submit a late roster if it is less than two months overdue. Three calendar months of unsubmitted attendance rosters will be available on the NC FAST Provider Portal to submit attendance: two previous and one current month. Unsubmitted attendance rosters older than the two previous months will cycle out on the last day of the month.)
  - Example: On October 5 by 9:00 PM, Providers should submit the roster for September services.
- 5) Payment will be released via direct deposit on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the following month. (In order to receive timely payment, rosters must be submitted on time. If submitted late, payment will be delayed by one month.)
  - Example: On October 15, payment for September services submitted rosters will be released to Providers' banks. (It may take up to October 20 for the banks to process the payments.)

The diagram below shows, at a high level, the new voucher and attendance process.



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#### 4.4 Setting up Direct Deposit\*\*

- 1) To receive payments from Federal and State funds for SCCA, each Provider will need to set up a direct deposit account. Each Provider will receive an NC FAST mailing containing information and instructions on how to access the website of NC FAST's direct deposit processor, FIS Merchant Services. (For providers participating in SCCA with a license issued after April 2016, the mailing will be sent after the provider enrolls through the Provider Portal.)
- 2) On the FIS website (<http://www.ebtedge.com/>), Providers will download a direct deposit contract.
- 3) Providers will complete the contract, providing valid IRS information and a voided check (for checking account) or deposit slip (for savings account). (FIS should be able to work with any bank that follows standard Automated Clearing House practices—most banks follow these practices.)
- 4) Providers will then mail or fax the contract to FIS.

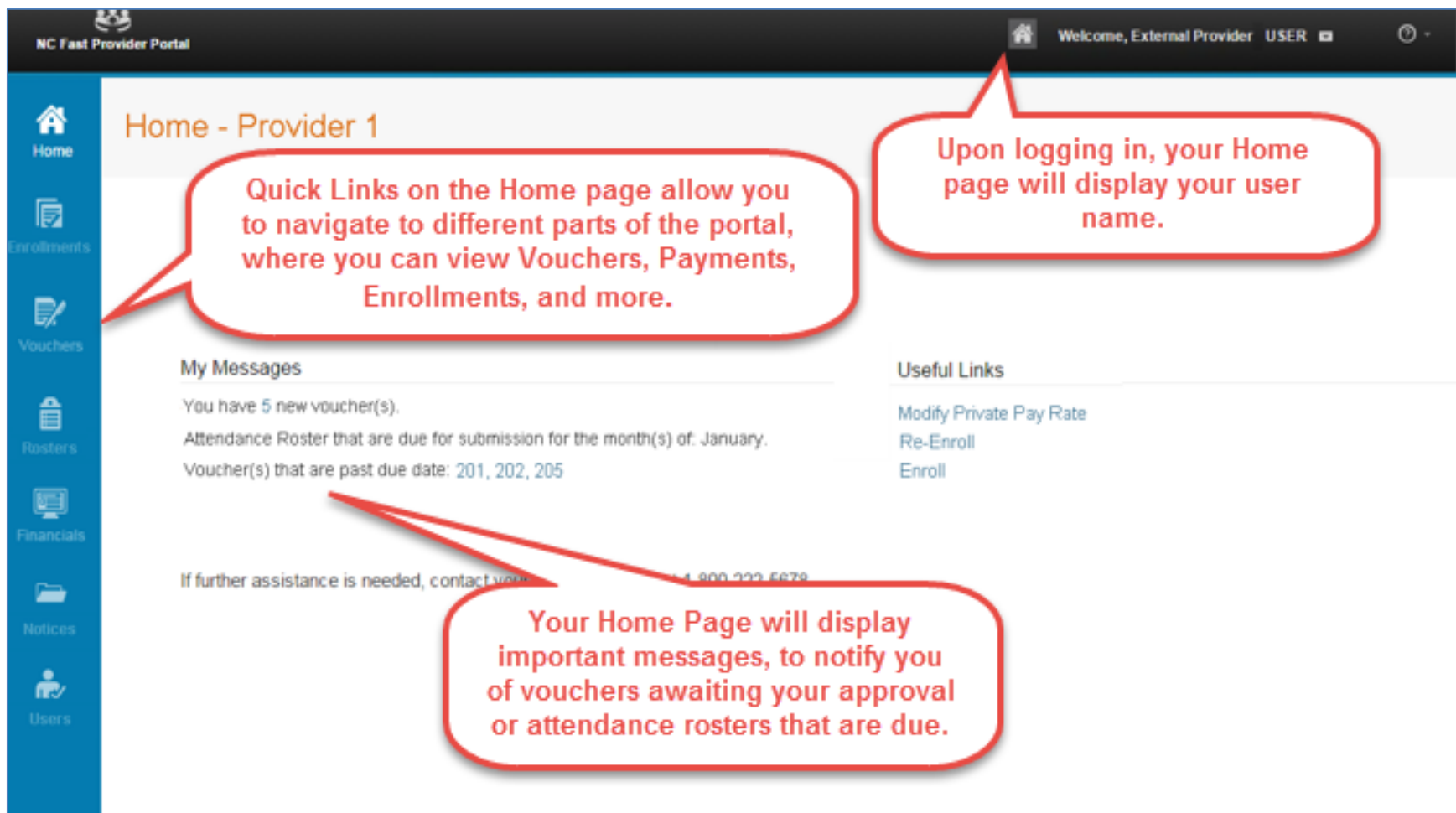
**\*\*This process is completed outside of the Provider Portal.**

## 4.5 Obtaining Support

Question/Issue	Contact	Availability
<p>Technical questions about an NCID, for example...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happens if I get an error when trying to submit my NCID request?</li> <li>• What type of NCID do I currently have?</li> </ul>	<p>NC Identity Management:</p> <p><a href="https://ncid.nc.gov">https://ncid.nc.gov</a> "contact us" link: <a href="mailto:its.incidents@its.nc.gov">its.incidents@its.nc.gov</a> or <b>800-722-3946</b></p>	<p><b>Currently available</b></p> <p>Hours: seven days per week, 24 hours per day</p>
<p>Questions about payments, SCCA policy, and non-technical questions about vouchers, attendance, private-pay count, reporting rate changes, etc.</p>	<p>County DSS/LPA:</p> <p><a href="https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Provider/Provider-Resources/Child-Care-Contacts-Lookup">https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Provider/Provider-Resources/Child-Care-Contacts-Lookup</a> (look up County LPA contact information, choosing County Child Care Contacts)</p>	<p><b>Currently available</b></p> <p>Days and hours may vary by county</p>
<p>Questions about Provider Portal functions and technical issues, including accepting vouchers, completing attendance, completing private-pay count, viewing payment history, reporting rate changes, etc.</p>	<p>Provider Help Desk:</p> <p><b>919-813-5460</b> (each provider should designate one staff member to track support requests as they are submitted--submit only once)</p>	<p><b>Currently available</b></p> <p>Normal hours: M-F 8a-6p <b>Extended Hours of Operation during the 1st – 5th of each month:</b> M-F 6a–9p, Sa 8a–6p, Su 12p–6p <b>CLOSED on State Holidays</b></p>
<p>Technical questions about direct deposit, for example, availability of funds, bank accounts, rejected payments due to bad bank account information, 1099, etc.</p>	<p>FIS Merchant Services:</p> <p><b>800-894-0050</b></p>	<p><b>Currently available</b></p> <p>Hours: M-F, 9a-6p</p>

## 5.0 PROVIDER PORTAL: AT A GLANCE

This section includes draft images of the Provider Portal with the intent to demonstrate the look and feel of the system.



**Home - Provider 1**

Quick Links on the Home page allow you to navigate to different parts of the portal, where you can view Vouchers, Payments, Enrollments, and more.

Upon logging in, your Home page will display your user name.

**My Messages**

You have 5 new voucher(s).  
Attendance Roster that are due for submission for the month(s) of: January.  
Voucher(s) that are past due date: 201, 202, 205

If further assistance is needed, contact your support center at 1-800-222-6679.

**Useful Links**

- Modify Private Pay Rate
- Re-Enroll
- Enroll

Your Home Page will display important messages, to notify you of vouchers awaiting your approval or attendance rosters that are due.



Home  
 Contracts  
**Vouchers**  
 Rosters  
 Financials  
 Notices  
 Users

Welcome, External Provider USER

## Vouchers - Provider 1

Vouchers History

Below is a list of vouchers that require your attention. Click the Voucher Action link to View, Accept, Reject or Print the voucher.

Voucher Number	Responsible Adult / Parent Name	Child Name	From Date	To Date	Status	Voucher Action
0124	Parent 1	Child 1	05-01-2016	05-01-2016	Pending Parent Signature	<a href="#">View</a>
0123	Parent 2	Child 2	04-01-2016	04-01-2016	Pending Provider Signature	<a href="#">Accept / Reject</a>
0122	Parent 3	Child 3	03-01-2016	03-01-2016	Pending Parent Signature	<a href="#">View</a>
0121	Parent 4	Child 4	02-01-2016	02-01-2016	Pending Provider Signature	<a href="#">Accept / Reject</a>

Depending on the voucher status, the voucher may be Accepted/Rejected OR may be in a view-only capacity (awaiting further action from the provider or the parent).

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## 6.0 PROVIDER USER ROLES

Users of the Provider Portal must have one of two roles that will determine the types of functions they will be able to complete within the Provider Portal.

Provider User: The users assigned to the Provider User role will have the ability to manage attendance and submit rosters, they will be able to enter private pay counts and accept or reject vouchers, and they will be able to view Provider notices and agreements.

Provider Director: The users assigned to the Provider Director role will have the ability to do all of the functions in the Provider User role, as well as perform Provider enrollment, Provider re-enrollment, and modification of private-pay rate.



## 7.0 QUESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Questions and Considerations:

- How will a Provider ensure reliable access to the internet to use the Provider Portal?
- Who will be authorized to access the Provider Portal on behalf of a Provider's facility? Of these individuals, who will be responsible for activities such as managing vouchers, submitting attendance rosters, and completing the Annual Provider Contract?
- Who from a Provider's facility will be responsible for contacting the LPA with the Provider's staff members' NCIDs in order for them to link the Provider's account and enable the Provider to use the Provider Portal?
- Who from a Provider's facility will be responsible for setting up direct deposit with the direct deposit processor?
- How will a Provider ensure that the Provider's staff fully understand the new expectations for SCCA?

### Recommendations:

- If a Provider is unable to get reliable internet access in the Provider's facility, identify a place where the Provider can complete activities using the Provider Portal (public library, home). The Provider should plan on needing to access the Provider Portal at least once per week.
- If a Provider does not currently have a bank account, establish one as soon as possible so the Provider can provide the information needed to continue receiving SCCA payments.
- Ensure a Provider is clearly setting expectations with the Provider's staff for the various processes that must be completed and corresponding deadlines for completion.
- Identify one person to gather all NCIDs and the expected user role of each person who will use the Provider Portal and provide these to your LPA.